2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AM50 Badaga AM50

1900 or a little before, thatch was replaced by tiled rooves which were considered more convenient, safe and prestigeful; and the Kotas do not generally lay tiles.

For at least the past century Badagas and Kotas have been building their houses of locally made bricks. Kota bricklayers have built Badaga houses, and Badaga bricklayers have also built Kota houses. In either case the traditional ties are not necessarily involved, if only because so very few Badagas or Kotas can lay bricks properly. In these situations payment is generally made in cash according to recognized rates for the labour performed.

Badaga Products

Apart from the annual grant of grain and cloth to Kotas, their Badaga partners used to give them whatever cattle died. 'All the cattle that die in the villages are carried off by the Kotas, and feasted on by them . . . and at no time do the Kotas thrive so well as when there is a murrain among the herds of the Todas and Badagas' (Metz, 1864, 128).

Although Badagas and Todas used to exchange cattle on occasion, no such trade ever took place between Kotas and Badagas; indeed until the mid-nineteenth century the other communities would not allow Kotas to own any buffaloes, and after they did have some they still did not milk them (Reclus, 1891: 192; Thurston, 1909, vol. IV, 7). The Kotas would eat every Badaga or Toda buffalo that died, however, or would kill and eat an aging beast (normally a bull) given them for the purpose; but it is noteworthy that once they started keeping herds they would never eat any of their own buffalo carcasses.[8]

Another item for which the Kotas looked to the Badagas in the last century was opium. Good quality opium was produced on the Nilgiris at that time, but the Badagas seem to have held a monopoly on it. Today anyone can buy poppy capsules illicitly in the town markets (Thurston, 1909, vol. IV, 9).

Irregular Services

There are certain services which Kotas are called upon to render only when some unusual situation arises. Thus Kotas do not normally help their Badaga partners to harvest the crops; but if a

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

> The hill people are so independent. . .that no temptation of wages will induce them to engage . . . as coolies, and they are only prevailed upon to work from a conviction that, refusing to do so, Government might make some just demands against them for increase of rent [land revenue]. . . .[4]

By the 1840s there were many Badaga families earning a certain amount during a few months of each year from townspeople, from plantations and perhaps from the new Mission (Ouchterlony, 1848, 64; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 64). Their economy was now monetized, though the majority of families were still dependent on farming for their food requirements.

EXPANSION OF THE MARKET ECONOMY (1850–1900)

During the second half of the nineteenth century far-reaching economic changes triggered by the British settlers introduced the concept of competition and the importance of valuation to the Badagas. There is little indication of any competitiveness in their indigenous exchange activities or bartering practices before about 1840.

The opening of coffee (1838) and tea (1846) plantations on the plateau called for a great deal of manual labour; and by the 1850s many Badaga men found themselves competing for the first time with immigrants in a labour market.[5] Each group constituted one-half of the work force (Grigg, 1880, 399), but the British estate owners now preferred Badaga workers to immigrants because of their diligence. The labourers were paid in cash, not grain.

Secondly, the sizeable European population on the hills was now requiring quantities of cabbage, carrot, potato and other European vegetables which some Badaga farmers were able to supply. Their tradition of intensive farming in small fields was readily adapted to the new crops (Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 35); and their venture was helped by a climate not unlike that of northwestern Europe (an English poet later was to muse on 'the sweet, half-English Neilgherry air').

During the latter half of the century a wide variety of indigenous farm products also found their way into the local market.[6] These foodstuffs were local varieties of wheat and barley, Italian, finger and slender millet, prince's feather (or amaranth), mustard seed,